

Friday 17th July 2020

Dear Parent / Carer,

Now that we are at the end of the school year I know that everyone's thoughts are turning to September and what the new academic year will look like for you and your children. Below I have begun to set out for you what our plans are to ensure that your children are safe while they are at school and, hopefully, answer some of the questions that you may have.

I know that it is an incredibly challenging time for you all and that there may still be questions that I am unable to answer at this time. Over the summer holidays I will continue to work on our Risk Assessments to ensure that we are prepared for the new school year.

Of course, please remember that all of our plans are subject to national government guidance, if the guidance changes over the summer period I will do my best to ensure that you are informed of any changes to our arrangements as soon as possible.

Start & Finish Times

As you may already be aware from reports in the press, the guidance is recommending that we stagger start and finish times slightly in order to ensure that few people are on site at any one time and thus support social distancing expectations. In September we will therefore have 2 different start and finish times for children in school. Please see the table below for information about when your child will start and finish school and what gate / entrance they should enter / leave by.

Year Group	Start Time	Finish Time	Gate / Entrance
Yr R	Phased start arrangements – please see previous letters		
Yr 1	8:45am	3:00pm	Ahlberg – Community Entrance Jeffers – Outdoor area gate
Yr 2	8:45am	3:00pm	KS1 Gate
Yr 3	8:45am	3:00pm	KS2 Gate
Yr 4	9:00am	3:15pm	KS1 Gate
Yr 5	9:00am	3:15pm	KS2 Gate
Yr 6	8:45am	3:00pm	Tolkien Class – KS1 Gate Horowitz Class – KS2 Gate

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We recognise that the staggered start times may provide challenges for some families with children in multiple year groups but please be patient with us – it is the safest way for us to ensure that 400+ children can gain access to the school while maintaining social distancing.

Social Distancing

Please continue to observe social distancing guidelines while on the school site maintaining at least 1m+ at all times and 2m if possible. We will continue to encourage children to observe distancing in school where possible too so, if your child has not been in school over recent months, it would be particularly helpful if you could support them in understanding this before they return in September.

Year Group Pods

While your child is in school they will spend the vast majority of their time in their class groups. Movement around the school will be limited and we will use external doors to move around the building as much as possible. There will however be times when the school space does not allow us to remain in class groups. For example at break times and lunch times both classes in each year group will be outside at the same time – forming a year group 'pod'. This will support children to maintain friendship groups with those in the parallel class while we still deliver the school timetable safely. While staff may move between pods, children will not mix between pods. This will dramatically reduce the number of contacts each child has and therefore help to prevent the spread of the virus.

Before and After-School Clubs

The guidance provided is quite clear that mixing between groups should be limited. For this reason we will be unable to run any before or after school clubs (including breakfast club) for at least the first half term. We will reassess this as more information becomes available and will re-start clubs as soon as we are able to do so safely but, while the guidance suggests that contacts between pupils should be as limited as possible, it would not be safe for us to allow children from multiple year groups to attend a club and then move to their class group / year group pod and expose their peers to germs from another class or pod.

Trips / Visits / Workshops

We will not be running any trips, visits or workshops in school during the first half term. Once the children are settled back in to school and we are able to safely assess which trips and visits would be most beneficial to children and can be completed safely we will plan for these to begin again.

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The office are currently processing refunds for payments made for trips, visits and tickets for this academic year and these should be with you shortly. They are also rearranging the Y4 and Y6 residentials to take place later in the academic year and more information will follow about these shortly.

Behaviour Expectations

We will spend time in the first days and weeks in September making the behaviour expectations clear to pupils again. We will work with them to support them to understand how important it is that they remain in their pods and designated areas of the school and do not cross over to others. In the very unlikely event that any children refuse to follow these rules we may contact parents to support us in helping children to follow them.

Lunch

From September all children will eat lunch in their classrooms rather than in the hall. At first our menu for school meals will be limited to sandwiches (with a choice of fillings) or a jacket potato (also with a choice of fillings). If your child has a school meal you can continue to order them in the usual way using School Money, selecting from the choices above, and your child's meal will be delivered to their classroom. Our caterers, ABM, are working to develop a menu with a greater range of meal choices after the October half term break. We will keep you updated with this as more information becomes available. As usual your child will also have a chance to be on the playground with their friends during the lunch break but this will be with the rest of their year group pod only and not a mixture of year groups.

Uniform & PE Kit

From September we will return to our usual uniform expectations in full. We will also only be providing outdoor PE sessions for the foreseeable future as it is likely that the rate of transmission of the virus is higher when people are exercising and therefore exhaling more heavily. It is therefore much safer if we are able to provide PE lessons outside. With this in mind, please ensure that your child brings a tracksuit and trainers to school as their PE kit – it will be important that they are warm enough while outside for their lessons.

Equipment

In the new academic year we will also be able to return to providing children with a reading book and library book that they are able to bring home to read. These books will be carefully selected

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to ensure that they are appropriate for your child's reading ability and will only be shared between year groups pods, not the wider school. When books are returned to school they will go through a period of 'quarantine' to ensure that they are safe for the next family to use. If you have any library or scheme reader books at home please ensure that they are returned to school on the first day in September so that they can be quarantined before being reshelfed. We currently have more than 500 library books and 500 scheme reading books out on loan and it will be incredibly difficult for us to get your children reading again if these are not returned.

We would like to ask that all other equipment bought in to school is kept to a minimum. Children are allowed to bring their coat (hat etc in the winter months), bag, PE kit, lunch and water bottle but do not need to bring any other equipment e.g. pencil cases to school as all equipment that they need for learning will be provided for them. Your child will need a water bottle as drinking fountains will not be in use.

Settling In / Recovery Curriculum

During the first few days in September your child's teacher will complete all of the transition activities with the class that they would usually have covered on the transition day in July. These will enable children to get to know their teacher and their new class mates and begin to settle in. During the following weeks we will then operate our Recovery Curriculum, details of which were sent out earlier this week. The Recovery Curriculum is aimed at assessing any gaps in children's learning that need to be addressed and building children's stamina as they return to school. It is very likely that they will be incredibly tired in these first few weeks as they readjust to the school routine again. If your child is struggling please let us know and we will do all that we can to help.

Assemblies

Assemblies will also continue to be different for your child. In order to keep your child safe and keep their daily contacts to a minimum, assemblies will continue to be held virtually for the foreseeable future.

School Office

While we will be able to have a greater number of visitors to the school site, these will still be only on an 'absolutely necessary' basis. For example, if your child needs support from an Educational Psychologist, these visits will now be able to take place. However, the School Office will not be open as normal and we would continue to ask you to contact us via parents@loatlandsprimary.net or by phone on 01536 506404 rather than coming in to the building.

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Keeping Children & Staff Safe

In addition to all of the measures described above we will also continue to have an enhanced cleaning regime in school. High contact surfaces such as door handles and toilet flushes will continue to be cleaned much more regularly.

We will also continue to encourage regular hand washing with children expected to wash their hands as soon as they arrive in the morning, before eating and each time they leave or re-enter the classroom.

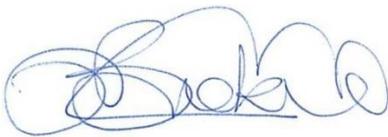
We have plenty of hand sanitiser in school so there is no need to send additional in for your child to use. We will continue to encourage children to maintain social distancing wherever possible and in classrooms, from Yr 2 upwards, children will be seated in rows, side by side rather than facing each other.

Doors and windows will be kept open to maintain good ventilation and opportunities for outdoor learning will be maximised.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all once again for your patience and understanding during the last few months. I know that this is a lengthy letter with a lot of information for you to absorb. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. We will continue to work on our risk assessments over the coming weeks and will inform you as soon as possible if there are any changes to the arrangements outlined above.

Wishing you all a peaceful and healthy summer break.

Kind regards



Mrs L E Buckley
Head Teacher

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